

Red Hot Mama

...you sure look good to me...

I see you, stamping around the luscious
corner in leopard print boots & thigh
wonder. Me, full of intent at the sight
of those metronoming hips. I'm trying
to see those dimples & not flip. I'm trying
to be in these slipshod acoustics without
tripping. Hooked & wanting to stay shook,
close to you as rough-printed fingers get
to guitar strings. Their avuncular vernaculars
fretting just like us. Yeah. Bighearted
striations strutting just like us. Yeah.
Mouths full of smoke, gloriously red
& upturned in the late-night singalong.
All these glittering highlights: skin
is the upside of lips, so just go on, mama.
You got me symmetrically split. You got
me cresting & leather slick: a whole
silhouette of wax & citrus & whatever
comes out will be objectively lit.

Good Thoughts, Bad Thoughts

...good thoughts bring forth good fruit...

So many blushing invitations in the hibiscus evening, tingling promise rings slipped on earlier in the habit of fixation & whatever it takes to get it in. I think *it* includes thumbs & surprisingly long tongues. It includes safe words for honest conversations. So many underserved possibilities—ribcaged inquiries, half-mooned with crescent moon tattoos & heart-thumping festoons. I can't wait to lick all of it off of you with something other than metaphor. Listen, please, because I love you like a solo loves a guitar: extravagant exhales of us, minor lights because gravity pulls up & toward the difficult center of my concaved chest. You hear that? Yes. Meanwhile, one eye stays closed while the bass leads the procession over the far sky straight into the yelling sun.

Excerpt from *Maggot Brain*

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The ubiquity of a jail cell tastes clammy,
like everything was a mistake immediately.

Bologna is the coin of the realm. Toilet
paper causes minor riots: shredded shirts,

slow comedowns & sterno cans brightening
the glare of wedding rings exchanged

in the backyard of forgetting. It doesn't even
matter in this incarceration of gold fronts,

dull reflections in metal sinks in the corner.
Somebody in the cell over is yells through

the start of withdrawal about being late
for his appointment. Everybody's time:

snatched, & its ticking innards ricochet
on cold drives from the suburb to urban renewal,

from the insistence of late rent, fenders rusting
in lake snow while the people are still harmonizing.

We are made out of bare needing, even in winter.
Somebody in the cell over yells over & over.

We are made out of blustery forgetting, out
of hindsight to back before your face & ribs

got beat until they bruised like a low-tide lake.